

Amendments

In accordance with 37 CFR §1.121, please amend the above-identified application as set forth below.

Amendments to the Claims:

Please amend the claims as set forth below.

1. (Currently Amended) In a round baler for baling harvested crops and having a baling chamber surrounded by a two-part housing of which a front part is rigidly connected to a frame of the baler while a rear part is in the form of a pivotal tailgate, the improvement comprising an actuating mechanism having a plurality of belts and rollers disposed adjacent one another within the baling chamber for enabling baling chamber size to vary when pivoted, and a tensioning arm provided with guide rollers, ~~and a pivotal arm~~ connected to the tensioning arm, wherein the tensioning arm is pivotally mounted on the frame of the baler, ~~via a hydraulic cylinder arranged between~~ operatively engaging the pivotal arm and a first arm of a bell crank, wherein ~~the first end~~ a fulcrum of the bell crank is pivotally mounted on a side wall of the baler's tailgate, and wherein a second arm of the bell crank is operatively engageable with a ~~latching~~ locking mechanism ~~on a~~ engageable with the frontal part of the housing and means for increasing a ~~latching~~ locking force on the ~~latching~~ locking mechanism as a bale in the baling chamber increases in size.

2. (Original) A round baler according to Claim 1, wherein the actuating mechanism has a plurality of rotating compression rollers.

3. (Previously Amended) A round baler according to Claim 1, wherein the actuating mechanism includes a plurality of mutually interlinked belts.

4. (Currently Amended) A round baler according to Claim 1, wherein a fixed stop is ~~arranged on the tailgate below the second~~ is disposed to engage the first arm of the bell crank.

5. (Previously Amended) A round baler according to Claim 1, wherein the means for increasing a latching force on the latching mechanism includes a tension spring arranged between the pivotal arm and a fixed mounting point on the frame of the baler.

6. (Currently Amended) In a round baler for baling harvested crops and having a baling chamber surrounded by a two-part housing of which a front part is rigidly connected to a frame of the baler while a rear part is in the form of a pivotal tailgate, the improvement comprising an actuating mechanism having a plurality of circulating flat-type belts and pressure rollers disposed adjacent one another within a peripheral region of the baling chamber for enabling baling chamber size to vary when pivoted, and a tensioning arm provided with guide rollers, ~~and a~~ pivotal arm connected to the tensioning arm, wherein the tensioning arm is pivotally mounted on the frame of the baler via a hydraulic cylinder arranged between the pivotal arm and a first arm of a bell crank, wherein ~~the first end~~ a fulcrum of the bell crank is pivotally mounted on a side wall of the baler's tailgate, and wherein a second arm of the bell crank is connected to a latch which is engageable with a keeper disposed on the frontal part of the housing and means for increasing a latching force on the keeper as a bale in the baling chamber increases in size.

7. (Original) A round baler according to Claim 6, wherein the actuating mechanism has a plurality of rotating compression rollers.

8. (Previously Amended) A round baler according to Claim 6, wherein the actuating mechanism includes a plurality of mutually interlinked belts.

9. (Currently Amended) A round baler according to Claim 6, wherein a fixed stop ~~is arranged on the tailgate below the second~~ is disposed to engage the first arm of the bell crank.

10. (Previously Amended) A round baler according to Claim 6, wherein the means for increasing a latching force on the keeper includes a tension spring arranged between the pivotal arm and a fixed mounting point on the frame of the baler.

11. (Currently Amended) A method for baling harvested crops utilizing a round baler having a baling chamber surrounded by a two-part housing of which a front part is rigidly connected to a frame of the baler while a rear part is in the form of a pivotal tailgate, the method comprising:

pivoting an actuating mechanism having a plurality of belts and rollers disposed adjacent to one another within the baling chamber to vary baling chamber size;

pivotally mounting a tensioning arm, having guide rollers and connected to a pivotal arm, on the frame of the baler via a hydraulic cylinder arranged between the pivotal arm and a first arm of a bell crank;

interconnecting a latch with a second arm of the bell crank;

engaging the latch with a keeper to lock the two-part housing in a closed position; and

increasing a latching force between the latch and the keeper as the size of the bale increases.

12. (Previously Amended) The method according to Claim 11, including the steps of: pivotally mounting the bell crank on a side wall of the baler's tailgate; and selectively engaging an arm of the bell crank with a frontal part of the housing via the latch.

13. (Previously Amended) The method according to Claim 11, including providing a plurality of mutually interlinked belts to form part of the actuating mechanism.

14. (Original) The method according to Claim 13, wherein the mutually interlinked belts are flat-type belts.

15. (Previously Amended) The method according to Claim 11, including arranging a fixed stop adjacent the bell crank for engagement when releasing the latch and opening the pivotal tailgate.

16. (Previously Amended) The method according to Claim 11, including arranging a tension spring between the pivotal arm and a fixed mounting point on the frame of the baler for biasing the tensioning arm into a lower end position.

17. (Original) The method according to Claim 11, wherein the step of engaging a second arm of the bell crank with a frontal part of the housing includes utilizing a pivotal pawl associated with the second arm of the bell crank and a stationary spigot disposed on the frontal part of the housing.

18. (Previously Added) A round bailer for bailing harvested crops having a frame, a frontal housing connected to the frame, and a rear housing pivotally connected to the frontal housing, the round bailer including:

- a latch pivotally mounted on the rear housing and operatively engaged with the frontal housing when the rear housing is in a closed position;

- a bell crank pivotally mounted on the rear housing and having first and second arms, the first arm of the bell crank operatively connected to the latch;

- a rotatable tensioning arm operatively connected to the frame;

- a pivotal arm rigidly connected to the tensioning arm for rotation therewith; and

- a hydraulic cylinder having first and second ends, the first end operatively connected to the second arm of the bell crank and the second end operatively connected to the pivotal arm; whereby engagement of the hydraulic cylinder disengages the latch from the frontal housing and pivots the rear housing from the closed to an open position.

19. (Previously Added) The round bailer according to claim 18, further including a keeper operatively mounted on the frontal housing;

20. (Previously Added) The round bailer according to claim 18, wherein the latch has an arcuate end.

21. (Previously Added) The round bailer according to claim 20, wherein the arcuate end of the latch engages a cylindrical keeper mounted on the frontal housing.

22. (Previously Added) The round bailer according to claim 18, further including a tension spring mounted to the frame and operatively connected to the pivotal arm.

23. (Previously Added) The round bailer according to claim 18, further including a fixed stop rigidly connected to the rear housing adjacent the bell crank.

24. (Previously Added) The round bailer according to claim 18, further including a rod intermediate the latch and the first arm of the bell crank.